

**Message #39****Ecclesiastes 11:7-10**

There are many passages in the Bible that teach us who know Christ that we should truly be people of joy. In the New Testament, the book of Philippians is one that truly communicates this point. In the Old Testament there is Ecclesiastes. God does not want us walking through life as some negative fundamentalist monk who does not dare enjoy his existence. In fact, God wants us to live a fulfilled and joyful life and if He is in the proper place in one's life, this possibility can and will become a reality.

**LIFE SHOULD BE A HAPPY AND JOYFUL EXPERIENCE AND IF GOD IS AT THE CENTER OF ONE'S LIFE AND IF ONE THINKS PROPERLY ABOUT LIFE AND GOD, HAPPINESS AND JOY WILL BE THE REALITY OF ONE'S LIFE.**

In the first six verses of this chapter, Solomon taught us how to succeed. In these final four verses of this chapter, Solomon teaches us how to be happy.

**KEY #1** – Joy and happiness are found by the use of one's eyes. **11:7**

Obviously, neither Solomon nor God intends for someone to use his eyes to literally go outside and look at the sun. To do such a thing for any length of time would not produce happiness, but blindness.

In the book of Ecclesiastes, the idea of seeing the sun versus not seeing the sun is the idea of living a life in empty futility and obscurity rather than living it to the hilt with meaning and purpose. The specific point of not seeing the sun in Ecclesiastes was the point of not even being born. To Solomon, a baby who didn't even see life was one who never saw the sun (6:3-6).

It is a good thing to be born into this world. Life can be a pleasant and joyful experience if God is kept in His proper place.

**KEY #2** – Joy and happiness are found by the use of one's mind. **11:8**

Happiness, fulfillment and joy have much to do with the way we think. In this verse we get two main uses of mind that are important for our happiness:

**Use #1** - Remember the days of darkness. **11:8**

1. Remember that life is short and we will soon die (days of darkness) and in this memory enjoy life. Death will put out the light of life.
2. Remember the times of calamity and hardships (days of darkness) and think how blessed we really are now and rejoice. Dark times of trials and trouble when contrasted to light times of blessings and prosperity can be real cause for celebration.

3. Remember that life before Christ (days of darkness) were marked by guilt, burdens, sin and despair. Think of all that Christ has done since salvation. We have been set free !

**Use #2** – Remember the future of futility. **11:8b**

I understand Solomon to be saying this—when life ends in the future someday, for the most part everything on this earth which we gave ourselves to, which seemed so important at the time, will be seen to be empty and futile.

So many things that rob us of our joy should never rob us of our joy.

When we are in eternity, the nothingness of things on this earth will become very clear. We do not want to invest our lives chasing shadows when we can have substance. There is no point letting things that will mean nothing in eternity rob us of our joy now. We should enjoy life, realizing none of the companies for which we work will even be in eternity.

**KEY #3** – Joy and happiness are found by the use of one's heart . **11:9**

How do we reconcile this with Numbers 15:39? By keeping God's future judgment in mind! There is an inspired proverb which says, "Commit your works to the LORD and your plans or thoughts will be established: (Prov. 16:3). Now how does God establish our plans or thoughts? By putting into our minds and hearts direction of movement or decisions we need to make.

Now the problem is we all have hearts that are deceitful and desperately wicked. So if we just take off on some tangent and make decisions based on our own hearts or minds, more than likely we will be making the wrong decisions. That is why the end of Ecclesiastes 11:9 is so important—follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes with God's future judgment in mind.

**KEY #4** – Joy and happiness are found by removing negatives from heart and body . **11:10**

The word "vexation" means in view of God's judgment, remove things from your life that will provoke Him. Here is a real key to happiness. Get things out of our lives that we know make God angry. Put away any evil from our body.

Happiness in this life or the next life will really never be found by evil practices. God wants us to enjoy life. It is fleeting like a vapor and until we come to terms with these principles, joy and happiness will not exist in our world.